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LAST A LIFETIME –
PAGE 9**



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A SUCCESSFUL START: THE SA BRICS THINK TANK

Before South Africa joined Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) in December 2010, each BRIC country had already appointed its own official national think tank that provided policy advice within a changing global order. These think tanks contributed to developing strategic approaches and issues for their countries to consider in international multilateral fora such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and United Nations.

In preparation for the 2013 Durban Leadership Summit, the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), together with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), called upon the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to incubate the South African BRICS Think Tank (SABTT) to join the other four think tanks, namely the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) of Brazil; the National Committee for BRICS Research (NRC/BRICS) of Russia; the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) of India; and the China Centre for Contemporary World Studies (CCCWS) of China.

This formidable group of institutions was tasked with establishing a BRICS Think Tanks Council (BTTC) on the sidelines of the March 2013 BRICS Leaders' Summit held in Durban. After much negotiation, the five think tanks signed the declaration to establish the BTTC as a 'platform for the exchange of ideas among researchers, academia and think tanks' in support of the aspirations of the respective countries.

The BTTC committed itself to convening the annual BRICS Academic Forum, which preceded the Leadership Summit, and to providing 'policy recommendations and guidance... to the BRICS leaders for consideration'. This was a significant milestone, because since the formation of BRIC(S) in 2010 there has been no formalised BRICS Think Tanks Council with a defined collective purpose.

One of the major tasks was for the BRICS think tanks to implement a decision of the Delhi BRICS Summit (2012) to take forward a process of developing a long-term vision and strategy for BRICS. ORF initiated the process after the Delhi Summit and Academic Forum. Subsequently the HSRC, as 2013/14 BTTC chair, developed the draft vision and strategy document for discussion with the other members of the BTTC.

The negotiations on the nature and content of the vision and strategy document started in March 2013 and were finalised at the BTTC meeting hosted by IPEA in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in March 2014. As a result of the diplomatic complexities, a year was needed to agree on the five pillars that would underpin the long-term vision for BRICS, namely:

1. Promoting co-operation for economic growth and development
2. Peace and security
3. Social justice, sustainable development and quality of life
4. Political and economic governance; and
5. Progress through knowledge and innovation sharing.

The specific recommendations emanating from the 2014 BTTC meeting will be handed over to the BRICS leaders at Fortaleza in Brazil, where the sixth BRICS Summit will be held in July 2014.

It is remarkable that, within just one year, the BTTC has been established and has produced its first policy recommendations, commissioned by the leaders of the BRICS countries.

More detailed work is currently underway to elaborate, through evidence-based research and a consultative process, upon each one of the five pillars – a task that should be completed by November 2014. In addition, the HSRC's successful 2013 BRICS seminar series will extend into 2014 and beyond.

The second greatest achievement of the SABTT over the past year has been co-ordinating a South African team of 10 scholars and researchers (from inside and outside the HSRC) to present papers at the Rio de Janeiro Academic Forum in March 2014. To ensure quality, the HSRC, together with DIRCO and DHET, organised a working session to allow members of 'team SA' to present their papers to peers, who provided constructive reviews.

Continues on page 2 >>



Professor Linda Richter with the deputy minister Michael Masutha of Science and Technology at the launch of the Centre of Excellence for Human Development.

PROFESSOR RICHTER TO HEAD CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

CoEs (five new CoEs were established in this round) and the only centre in the social sciences and humanities.

Richter, an A-rated scientist who holds positions at both Wits and the other lead university in the CoE, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is being seconded to Wits for 60% of her time until her retirement from the HSRC at the end of June 2015, after which she will take up the position full-time.

The centre has five broad activity areas, namely original research using new and secondary data; education and training, particularly of postgraduate students and post-doctoral fellows; the dissemination of scientific results for the benefit of policies and public information; the establishment of networks of collaborations with centres and individual researchers across South Africa, the region and internationally; and lastly, rendering services to the scientific community and society through academic and social engagement by the experts brought together under the centre.

Richter, assisted by a small executive committee of principal scientists, will report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research at Wits. In addition, an advisory board comprising representatives of the main participating institutions and key stakeholders will meet annually to provide guidance on the general direction and achievements of the centre. A scientific advisory committee, comprising eminent local and international scientists, will reflect and advise on the scientific approach and quality of the work undertaken through the centre.

Professor Linda Richter, a Distinguished Research Fellow in the HIV, STIs and TB programme at the HSRC, has been appointed the first director of the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Human Development. The announcement was made at a function on 22 April 2014 at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), from where the centre will be administered and managed.

The Department of Science and Technology and the National Research Foundation are in the process of establishing various CoEs, which act as mechanisms to increase scientific productivity by providing funding to support strategic, long-term research. The CoE for Human Development is one of 14



ELECTRONIC DATA COLLECTION MORE RELIABLE THAN PEN AND PAPER

Dr Alistair van Heerden

A new policy brief from the HSRC, entitled *Evidence for the feasibility, acceptability, accuracy and use of electronic data collection methods for health in KwaZulu-Natal*, states electronic data-collection methods are feasible, acceptable, accurate and usable.

Dr Alistair van Heerden, a post-doctoral fellow in the HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB research programme, reviewed the available literature and, weighing up the evidence gained during research in the Sweetwaters area outside Pietermaritzburg, made several recommendations for district- and provincial-level health management.

'Accurate and timely information is essential to the surveillance and delivery of healthcare that meets the needs of a population,' says Van Heerden. 'Decision makers need confidence that the data on which they base their

fiscal allocations is both accurate and recent. The South African District Health Information System (DHIS) is known to suffer from a number of challenges relating to quality, accuracy and timeliness of the data, which limits its usefulness.'

This results in double counting, undercounting, out-of-date data-collection forms and staff shortages – all aspects that erode the quality of data collected and, by implication, throw into doubt budget decisions made on the strength of their analysis.

Electronic data collection has been proposed as an alternative that has the potential to overcome many of the traditional challenges faced by pen and paper registers.

For further reading, go to <http://bit.ly/1igZQtw>.

Consequently, these scholars presented in Rio de Janeiro their thought-provoking papers on a range of subjects, including:

1. BRICS and their neighbours – trade and investment
2. New middle classes: emerging groups in emerging countries
3. Sustainable inclusive development
4. Peace and security issues
5. ICTs and innovation challenges in the BRICS
6. BRICS international development co-operation
7. Rapid urbanisation: the challenge of the mega cities
8. Productivity and the middle income trap
9. BRICS and global governance
10. Social technologies

The range of topics discussed at the Brazil meeting suggests that academics are getting to grips with common challenges facing the BRICS countries. One of the main outcomes of the meeting was recognition of the need for developing common definitions and indicators to measure social, economic and cultural phenomena across and within BRICS in order to develop a 'common language' for this powerful new multilateral grouping on the global stage.

The fact that leaders of the BRICS summit commissioned academics and policy advisors to develop a vision and strategy augurs very well for the strategic choices BRICS will make. In an era of limited resources, it is wise to have think tanks dedicated to BRICS development, particularly at this stage of a changing global economic, political and social environment. Given the diversity of issues considered, the carefully considered recommendations made by a diverse team of think tanks are likely to help BRICS countries engage with one another and the world based on a well-informed set of recommendations.



Professor Olive Shisana, BA(SS), MA, ScD, Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* (Monash University)
CEO, HSRC

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES AMONG TB PATIENTS

In spite of the high prevalence of tuberculosis (TB) worldwide, there are only a few studies on its psychiatric complications, such as suicidal behaviour. Professor Karl Peltzer and Dr Julia Louw, both in the HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB programme at the HSRC, reported on a study to assess the prevalence of suicidal behaviour and its associated factors among TB patients in public primary care in South Africa. The study was published in an article in the *Indian Journal of Medical Research* (Aug 2013; 138(2): 194–200).

A research team conducted a survey in three provinces of South Africa among new patients and among those newly retreated within one month of anti-tuberculosis treatment. The sample included 4 900 (54.5% men and women 45.5%) consecutively selected TB patients from 42 public primary care clinics in three districts in South Africa.

The findings were that 322 patients (9.0%) reported forming ideas of suicide (suicidal ideation) and 131 patients (3.1%) had a history of attempted suicide. The analysis showed that psychological distress, post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSDs), harmful alcohol use and being a TB retreatment patient were associated with forming ideas about suicide and psychological distress.

Patients that showed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and harmful alcohol use were associated with a suicide attempt. The authors recommended that clinicians be aware of suicidality in TB patients to reduce mortality.

CIGARETTE TAX 'NOT ENOUGH'

The sin tax increase for tobacco products was not enough to put the youth off smoking, the National Council Against Smoking maintained in a media release on 27 February 2014, as reported by Sapa.

The statement followed Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan's budget increase of excise duties on a pack of 20 cigarettes by 68% from R10.90 to R11.60.

'This modest hike means that the treasury has once again spurned the opportunity to reduce smoking among the youth, save lives and generate revenue,' said the council's executive director, Yussuf Saloojee.

According to the council, had the increase been R1.20 per packet, almost 620 million fewer cigarettes would have been smoked in the next year. This would have generated government revenues of around R500 million.

'The treasury's priorities favour business above health, based on the naive assumption that containing cigarette excise tax will contain the illicit trade in cigarettes,' Saloojee said.

In a response by the Tobacco Institute of SA (Tisa), chief executive, Francois van der Merwe, acknowledged the importance of excise duties on tobacco as an extremely valuable source of income for the fiscus. 'We are grateful to treasury for maintaining the 52% tax incidence on tobacco products,' he said.

He added that as tobacco products became more expensive, illicit tobacco operators used the opportunity to avoid paying taxes, which in turn allowed them to sell their illegal products more cheaply.

'An uneven playing field is created with the legal tobacco sector losing market share and government losing revenue. Only the illicit operators flourish,' he said.

The new excise duties for other types of tobacco products included a nine cent increase per 25g of pipe tobacco, R5.11 per 23g of cigars and 87c per 50g of roll-your-own tobacco.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND TRAUMATIC STRESS NEGLECTED IN MENTAL HEALTH

South Africa has a high prevalence of mental health disorders – a substantial number of which remain undiagnosed and untreated. A South African population-based study found a 28.4% prevalence of psychological distress among participants 15 years and older. The SANHANES-I team reports.

The results of the first South African National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (SANHANES-I) indicated that mental health was possibly neglected in the country given that a relatively high prevalence of psychological distress and traumatic stress was found.

Distress higher in females, black Africans

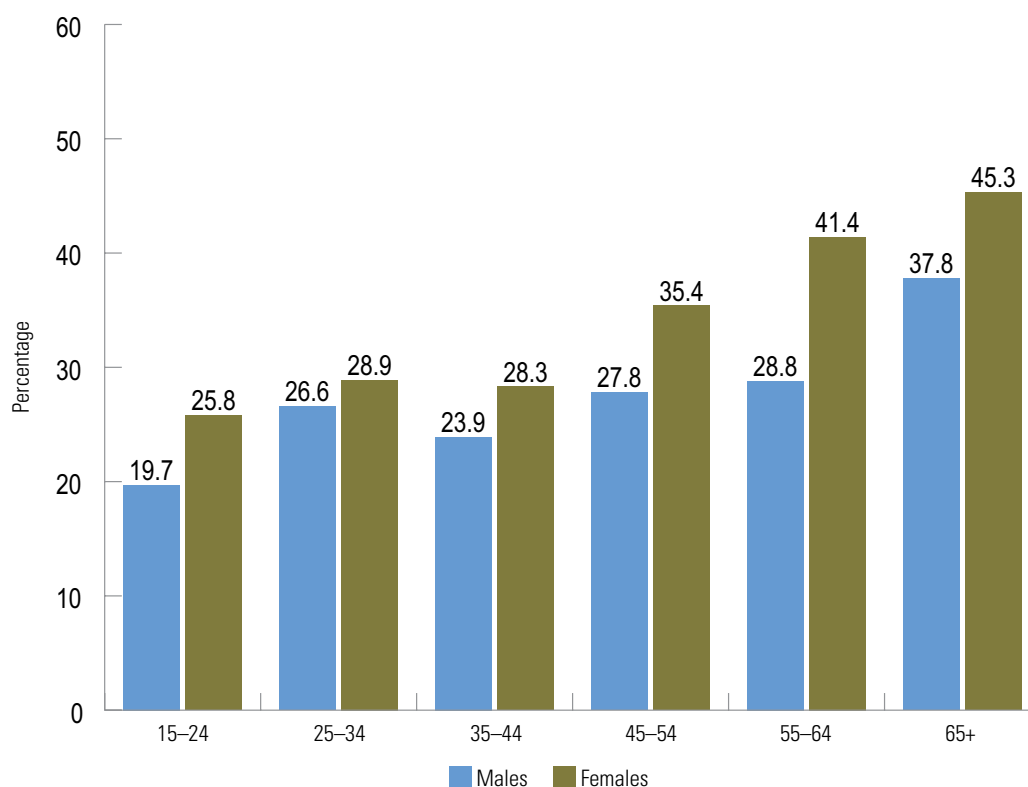
The prevalence of psychological distress was found to be 28.4% among participants 15 years and older. Psychological distress was higher in females (31.4%) than males (25%) and higher among black Africans (31.2%) than in white and coloured

participants (17.7% and 17.8% respectively). The prevalence of psychological distress also increased with age (Figure 1).

The prevalence of psychological distress was found to be 28.4% among participants 15 years and older.



Figure 1: Prevalence of psychological distress in adults 15 years and older by sex and age, SA 2012



Source: SANHANES-I 2012



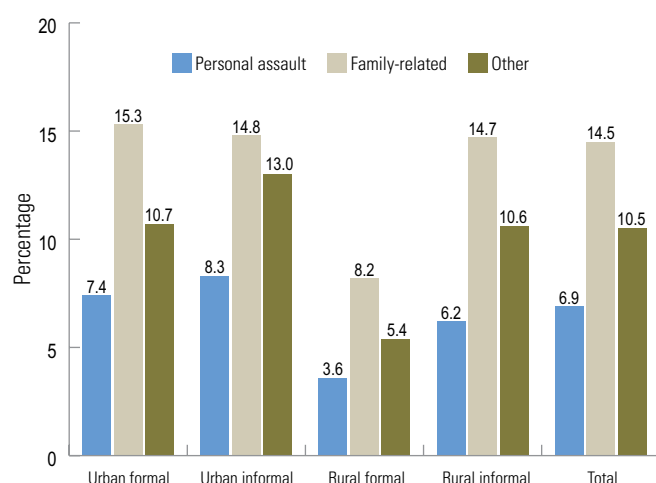
Family-related traumatic events were the most reported specific type of trauma experienced, followed by events associated with personal assault.

Traumatic events over a lifetime were mostly associated with family-related events followed by personal assaults.



Experiences of traumatic events over a lifetime were mostly associated with family-related events (14.5%) followed by personal assaults (6.9%). According to the areas where participants lived, those from urban areas (informal and formal) reported higher rates of personal assault compared to rural formal areas. Participants from urban formal areas also reported higher rates of family-related trauma compared to rural formal areas (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Experience of traumatic events by locality and type of trauma, SA 2012



Source: SANHANES-I 2012

Discussion and recommendations

It is important for health authorities to recognise the burden of psychological distress among these specific groups of vulnerable individuals and to implement targeted interventions. Traumatic events may serve as precursors to severe mental distress and possible post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Family-related traumatic events (witnessing or having knowledge of violence against a family member or loved one) were the most reported specific type of trauma experienced, followed by events associated with personal assault (violence experienced by the participant themselves).

The current study estimated that at least one third of the population 15 years and older was psychologically distressed, and the highest percentage of lifetime experiences of traumatic events was associated with family and personal assault events. It is recommended that public mental health services be revised to meet population needs in South Africa.

More should be done to screen, diagnose and treat people with common mental health disorders presenting at healthcare facilities. Furthermore, mental health should be incorporated as part of routine care. It is recommended that the national departments of health and social development urgently address the shortage of mental health services and professionals within the public health system. ■

Authors: Dr Nompumelelo Zungu, chief research specialist, office of the CEO, HSRC; Professor Pamela Naidoo, research director, Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation programme, HSRC; Professor Leickness Simbayi, executive director, HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB programme, HSRC; and Meredith Evans, research associate, office of the CEO, HSRC.

CONCERNS OVER THE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TB AND HIV CO-INFECTION

South Africa ranks third highest in the world in generating new cases of the highly contagious disease, tuberculosis (TB), and is one of the 22 high TB-burden countries that constitute about 80% of global TB cases. A lack of knowledge of the disease could be a factor contributing to SA's high TB prevalence rate, explain *Pamela Naidoo* and *Leickness Simbayi*.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that in 2001, the prevalence of TB in South Africa was 1.25% (630 000 cases out of a population of 50.5 million, figures based on notified cases). The country also has a high rate of TB/HIV co-infection, which makes up 25% of all TB-HIV co-infections in the world.

It is estimated that about 1% of the South African population develops TB every year. The disease is one of the key priorities of the National Department of Health, which recognises that TB is a curable disease, provided those infected strictly adhere to TB treatment regimens.

In SANHANES-I, while the self-reported lifetime prevalence of TB was ascertained, there was a focus on the social and psychological factors associated with the disease. The self-reported lifetime prevalence of TB in respondents aged 15 years and older was found to be 5.9%.

It is difficult to compare this prevalence figure with the notified case figures for TB on a year-on-year basis because SANHANES-I obtained a response from respondents about whether they were ever diagnosed with the disease in their lifetime. Given the fact that case detection for all forms of TB in South Africa has increased from 148 164 in 2004 to 401 048

in 2010, the self-reported prevalence of 5.9% among the age group 15 years and older in this survey may be lower than an estimate based on bio-marker testing. Notable, however, was the highest lifetime prevalence (8.6%) of TB among coloured respondents in this survey, which was consistent with the existing trend for prevalence of TB in this population group.

The majority of respondents perceived TB to be a very serious disease.



While the majority of respondents (91.4%) in SANHANES-I perceived TB to be a very serious disease, many of the participants (86.3%) had a limited knowledge of the signs and symptoms of TB, with only 3.3% knowing six or more signs and symptoms. This implied that these respondents were less likely to seek medical care because of their limited knowledge of the characteristics of the disease.

Many of the participants had a limited knowledge of the signs and symptoms of TB.



A woman at Pigg's Peak Hospital waits her turn to be screened for TB, Swaziland.
Credit: WHO/H.M. Dias

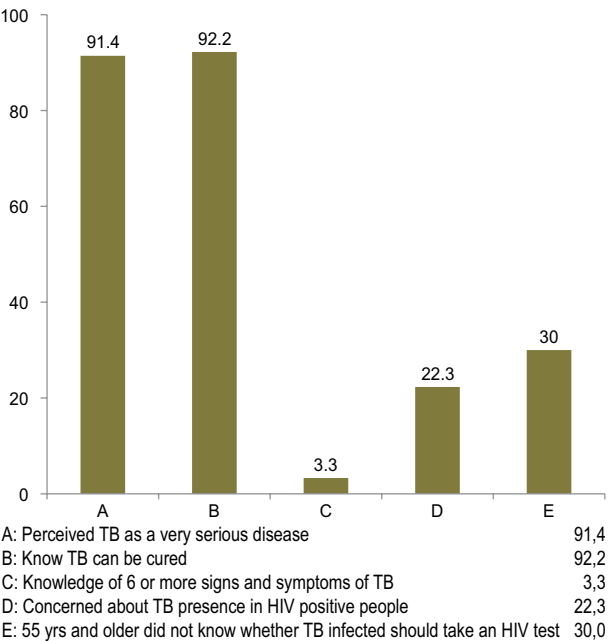
In terms of the perceptions about the co-morbidity between TB and HIV, the finding that only 22.3% of respondents were concerned about the presence of TB in HIV positive individuals may be an indication that they did not fully understand the extent of the TB and HIV co-infection. In addition, about 30% of respondents 55 years and older stated that they did not know whether individuals with TB should take an HIV test. Once again, this implied that the older participants were not fully aware of the extent of TB and HIV co-morbidity.

Older participants were not fully aware of the extent of TB and HIV co-morbidity.



Another important key finding in the survey was that the majority of participants (92.2%) knew that TB could be cured. Figure 1 illustrates the TB knowledge of participants 15 years and older.

Figure 1: Tuberculosis knowledge of participants 15 years and older



Recommendations

Based on the key findings on the psychosocial determinants of TB, it is recommended that the National Department of Health engages activities to reduce the number of TB cases and promote the overall prevention of TB. These activities could include implementing a health literacy campaign focusing on TB and TB/HIV co-morbidity; encouraging testing for TB among HIV positive individuals and vice versa; and supporting evidence-based psychosocial programmes for TB prevention. ■

Authors: Professor Pamela Naidoo, research director, Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation programme, HSRC; and Professor Leickness Simbayi, executive director, HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB research programme, HSRC.

GENDER INEQUALITY PERSISTS IN ARTISAN EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The highly discriminatory nature of the artisan labour market and skilling system is compelling the government to focus on ways in which to transform such systems. *Tamlynne Meyer* and *Angelique Wildschut* assess the extent to which this transformation has been achieved with regards to greater representivity of women employed as artisans in the South African labour market.

The artisan labour market is facing two important issues, the need for expansion and the need for transformation. Expansion is required to respond to the widely acknowledged need for more intermediate level artisan and technical skills. Transformation is demanded by South Africa’s constitution and to remedy the historical linkages between social exclusion, vocational education and training, and employment in this country.

Gender equality and the law

The legal framework relevant to the regulation of gender equality in artisan employment includes the constitution and the Employment Equity Act, as well as many other policy documents aimed at promoting equal representation and fair employment practices in the workplace. South Africa has also ratified a number of international conventions including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination; the UN Millennium Declaration and its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and the SADC Gender and Development Protocol is party to the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality, and subscribes to the Framework for Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality.



Men continued to significantly outnumber women in artisan employment.



In addition to government interventions, organisations and sectors are required to draft their own policies based on the needs of their specific organisations and sectors, as directed by the Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill.

Study results

The adoption of a legal and policy framework is only one aspect of the broader institutional framework in which

change has to take place. This study on artisan status and identity revealed interesting trends that illustrate how gender inequality remains a relevant concern in relation to artisan employment in South Africa.

Table 1 illustrates the finding that men continued to significantly outnumber women in artisan employment in the country.

Table 1: Artisan workers by gender, 2006–2011 (%)

		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total	Male	84.48	82.85	85.84	86.49	87.91	88.71
	Female	15.52	17.15	14.16	13.51	12.09	11.29
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: LFS (2006/2–2007/2) and QLFS (2008/4–2011/4)

Women were found to have the highest proportional representation in the more easily sex-typed feminine set of trades.



Further analysis of the data (Table 2 on page 8) supported these trends and showed how they were replicated, even at sub-industry levels. For instance, the highest proportions of women were found in the precision; handcraft; printing and related trades; and other craft and related trades (including clothing and textile trades) sectors, whereas men had the

strongest proportional representation in the metal, machinery and related trades sectors.

Women were thus found to have the highest proportional representation in the more easily sex-typed feminine set of trades as opposed to those that were more easily sex-typed masculine.

Table 2: Artisan employment by sub-industry and gender, 2006–2011 (%)

Total national	Gender	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Extraction and building trades	Male	91.52	94.69	95.79	93.41	95.35	95.79
	Female	8.48	5.31	4.21	6.59	4.65	4.21
Metal, machinery and related trades	Male	95.71	90.92	93.77	96.17	97.59	96.73
	Female	4.29	9.08	6.23	3.83	2.41	3.27
Precision, handicraft, printing and related trades	Male	79.05	73.86	71.35	75.49	69.60	75.74
	Female	20.95	26.14	28.65	24.51	30.40	24.26
Other craft and related trades	Male	40.17	30.74	41.17	43.39	47.13	47.59
	Female	59.83	69.26	58.83	56.61	52.57	52.41
Total craft and related trades	Male	84.48	82.85	85.84	86.49	87.91	88.71
	Female	15.52	17.15	14.16	13.51	12.09	11.29

Source: LFS (2006/2–2007/2) and QLFS (2008/4–2011/4)



Trends point not only to a gender unequal split in employment, but highly gendered sub-industry participation as well.



From this data it is clear artisan employment continues to be heavily dominated by men and in fact, this trend has been strengthening over time. It is also evident that overarching trends point not only to a gender unequal split in employment, but highly gendered sub-industry participation as well.

These trends raise interesting questions for further qualitative investigation. What are the reasons for the perpetuation of such gendered trends in artisan work

in the country? How does one adequately understand these and how can one intervene in meaningful ways to effect positive change?

The trends in and of themselves might not be viewed as problematic, but considered against the extent and diversity of the government's efforts to transform the workforce, at the very least they require a consideration of possible interventions towards better gender outcomes. ■

Authors: Tamlynne Meyer, master's trainee/junior researcher, Education and Skills Development (ESD) programme, HSRC; Dr Angelique Wildschut, research specialist, ESD.

The article is based on Wildschut, A., Meyer, T., Roodt, J., Visser, M., Ngazimbi, X. & Kruss, G. (2013) Studying artisans in the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector. Client report prepared for the merSETA/HSRC Artisan Identity and Status Project: The unfolding South African story.

RISK-TAKING IN ADULTHOOD OFTEN THE RESULT OF CHILDHOOD SCARS

Childhood sexual and physical abuse have been linked to adolescent and adult risky sexual behaviours, including early sexual debut, an increased number of sexual partners, unprotected sex, alcohol and drug use during sex and sexual violence. **Linda Richter** reports on a study conducted in three African countries – South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe – that found high rates in childhood sexual and physical abuse among men and women, showing a strong relationship with a range of sexual risk behaviours.

Representative baseline community surveys were conducted in 2005 at four sites in the three countries as part of a multi-year randomised control trial called Project Accept. The objective was to rapidly increase knowledge of HIV status and mobilise community responses to reduce HIV incidence, stigmatisation and high-risk sexual behaviour.

From randomly sampled households in 34 communities – 16 in South Africa, 10 in Tanzania and eight in Zimbabwe – more than 14 600 male and female participants aged 18–32 completed interview-based questionnaires.

In South Africa, eight communities were selected from Vulindlela, close to Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal, a mixed rural and semi-urban, largely Zulu-speaking area with a population of approximately 553 000. The other eight communities were selected from Soweto, South

Africa's most densely populated urban area adjacent to Johannesburg, with a population of approximately two million people from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds.

The 10 communities in Tanzania were selected from Kisarawe, located in the country's Pwani region. This is an agricultural area with a largely Muslim population of approximately 160 000. The eight communities in Zimbabwe were selected from Mutoko outside Harare, a rural district with a population of approximately 130 000.

Gender, age, education and other demographics

Table 1 shows the rates of exposure to child physical abuse (CPA) and/or child sexual abuse (CSA). Such abuse leads to a range of outcome variables related to HIV risk, as reflected in Table 2 on page 10 (by gender and setting).

Table 1: Rates of assessed exposure (abuse) by gender and site (N denotes the number of participants who answered the particular question, followed by the percentage (%)).

	Zimbabwe		Tanzania		Vulindlela, SA		Soweto, SA	
	Male (N = 1 237)	Female (N = 1 637)	Male (N = 1 423)	Female (N = 1 650)	Male (N = 1 076)	Female (N = 1 520)	Male (N = 1 208)	Female (N = 1 455)
Exposures								
CSA, N (%)	56 (4.5)	72 (4.4)	59 (4.2)	34 (2.1)	17 (1.6)	36 (2.4)	49 (4.1)	71 (4.9)
CPA, N (%)	338 (27.4)	254 (15.6)	212 (14.9)	71 (4.3)	167 (15.6)	98 (6.5)	181 (15)	124 (8.5)
CSA or CPA, N (%)	360 (29.1)	301 (18.4)	251 (17.7)	100 (6.1)	178 (16.6)	121 (8.0)	205 (17.1)	166 (11.4)
CSA and CPA, N (%)	34 (2.8)	25 (1.5)	20 (1.4)	5 (0.3)	6 (0.6)	13 (0.9)	25 (2.1)	29 (2.0)

Rates of reported childhood physical abuse were much higher than reports of sexual abuse.



in Soweto. In all settings, except Zimbabwe, rates of reported childhood sexual abuse were lower among men than women.

Rates of reported childhood physical abuse were much higher than reports of sexual abuse, ranging from 4.3% among women in Tanzania to 27.4% among men in Zimbabwe. Reported physical abuse among women in Zimbabwe was roughly two to three times higher than in Tanzania and South Africa.

The average rates of reported childhood sexual abuse ranged from 1.6% among men in Vulindlela to 4.9% among women

There were also strong relationships between childhood abuse and lifelong alcohol and drug use.



Relationships between child abuse and sexual risk behaviours

The researchers found a relationship between sexual and physical abuse in childhood and a range of reported sexual risk behaviours, alcohol and drug use, partner violence and absence of HIV preventive behaviours among men and women in adulthood (Table 2).

Table 2: Rates of outcome (sexual risk behaviour) by gender and site (N denotes the number of participants who answered the particular question, followed by the percentage (%)).

	Zimbabwe		Tanzania		Vulindlela, SA		Soweto, SA	
	Male (N = 1 237)	Female (N = 1 637)	Male (N = 1 423)	Female (N = 1 650)	Male (N = 1 076)	Female (N = 1 520)	Male (N = 1 208)	Female (N = 1 455)
Preventive behaviour – all respondents who received the result of their last HIV test								
HIV testing								
Ever voluntarily tested for HIV, n (%)	67 (5.4) N = 1 236	178 (10.9) N = 1 636	144 (10.1) N = 1 420	699 (42.4) N = 1 649	174 (16.2) N = 1 072	606 (39.9) N = 1 517	348 (28.9) N = 1 205	764 (52.6) N = 1 453
Median no. lifetime tests, range	1 (1–8) N = 70	1 (1–7) N = 19	1 (1–10) N = 149	1 (1–15) N = 784	1 (1–15) N = 176	2 (1–16) N = 65	2 (1–21) N = 359	2 (1–32) N = 940
HIV+ at last test, n (%)	4 (6.7) N = 60	8 (4.8) N = 165	0 (0.0) N = 127	1 (0.2) N = 664	15 (10.2) N = 147	101 (17.6) N = 575	6 (1.9) N = 321	71 (8.1) N = 877
Told sex partner results of HIV test, n (%)	35 (83.3) N = 42	110 (8.33) N = 132	77 (80.2) N = 96	523 (93.7) N = 558	118 (77.1) N = 153	456 (83.2) N = 548	249 (85.0) N = 293	713 (88.9) N = 802



Sexual debut occurred half a year earlier among men and women who reported childhood abuse as compared to those who did not. Men who reported childhood abuse were one and a half times more likely to have had more than one sexual partner in the six months preceding the survey. Both men and women with histories of child abuse were more than twice as likely to have experienced forced sex in the six months prior to the survey, and at least three times more likely to have had a partner who had hurt them.

There were also strong relationships between childhood abuse and lifelong alcohol and drug use, especially among women, with a three-fold increase among women abused in childhood.

Both men and women who reported childhood abuse were more likely to have taken an HIV test voluntarily. These men were also more likely to report that they tested HIV-positive as adults than non-abused men, by a factor of three. Men with reported histories of childhood abuse were also less likely to disclose their HIV status to a partner.

Discussion

The results confirmed associations between childhood abuse and adult sexual risk behaviour. Especially notable were rates of childhood abuse among African men, including sexual abuse, as well as high rates of recent forced sex and partner violence among men. This has not previously been reported from such sizeable population-based samples in the region.

In many prior studies, higher rates of childhood sexual abuse were reported among women. Lower rates of reported childhood sexual abuse among men may be underestimated as a result of under-reporting, resulting from stigma and the fear of being considered 'un-manly'.

As far as could be discerned, this is one of the first studies reporting a relationship between childhood abuse and sexual risk behaviours in adulthood among African men.

The 'virgin myth' is not considered a major factor driving the sexual abuse of children.



Long-term harm

The researchers reason that maladaptive emotional and behavioural associations with sex, as a result of childhood abuse, interfere with the development of close relationships and a sense of self-efficacy, and increase the individual's sense of shame, isolation and stigmatisation. Most child abuse is perpetrated by people who are known to the child and on whom the child depends for security and affection; the betrayal of trust and frequent denial further complicate an abused child's ability to relate to others.

While there are isolated reports of young virgins being used to 'cleanse' men of sexually transmitted infections and HIV, the so-called 'virgin myth' is not considered to be a major factor driving the sexual abuse of children in sub-Saharan Africa. Instead, patriarchy and the obedience demanded of women and children in traditional societies, the acceptance of the view that men's sexual urges are 'uncontrollable', endemic interpersonal violence, and substance abuse are believed to account for much of the abuse of children.

The exposure to risk among young people troubled by such childhood events may be increased by their relative powerlessness to take up and implement HIV-preventive behaviours even when they have knowledge. Young people may need additional assistance beginning, for example, by screening for sexual abuse histories. At the same time, greater public awareness and prevention of child abuse, both sexual and physical, is needed as are services for affected children and families.

Sexual risk... is moulded by social relationships and interpersonal encounters throughout child development.



The strength of this study lies in large representative samples from three sub-Saharan African countries. It adds to the emerging evidence of the carry-over of adverse effects from childhood abuse into maladaptive approaches to sexuality and relationships, including engaging in behaviours that put the individual at risk of HIV infection.



Sexual risk does not arise at puberty when sexual interests and behaviour usually manifest. Rather, it is moulded by social relationships and interpersonal encounters throughout child development, especially by experiences with the salience of abuse.

Abuse prevention is imperative in situations of known child vulnerability in order to avoid inter-generational cycles of sexual risk and HIV infection in high HIV-prevalence environments. It is also important as a secondary prevention strategy among people living with HIV who have been abused in childhood. ■

Author: Professor Linda Richter, distinguished research fellow, HIV, STIs and TB programme, HSRC.

The full paper, Reported Physical and Sexual Abuse in Childhood and Adult HIV Risk Behaviour in Three African Countries: Findings from Project Accept (HPTN-043), by Linda Richter et al, was published in AIDS and Behavior, February 2014, Volume 18, Issue 2, pp 381-389. The full article is available on <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10461-013-0439-7> page-1



DEMOCRACY'S DIVIDEND: DOES DEMOCRACY WORK FOR SOUTH AFRICANS?

Satisfaction with democracy is one of the most common measures of political support for democracy employed in survey research, serving as an effective barometer of general democratic functioning in any society. *Benjamin Roberts et al*, examined trends in democratic satisfaction over the course of the last decade and found strong discontent.

Since its inception in 2003, the SASAS series has asked nationally representative samples of adults aged 16 years and older a range of questions designed to understand underlying values concerning citizenship, democracy and governance. Satisfaction with democracy is a global measure of the performance of a government.

The number of respondents in each survey from 2003 to 2013 ranged between 2 500 and 3 300. The latest survey round, which was conducted between October and December 2013, consisted of a representative sample of 2 885 respondents living in private residence.

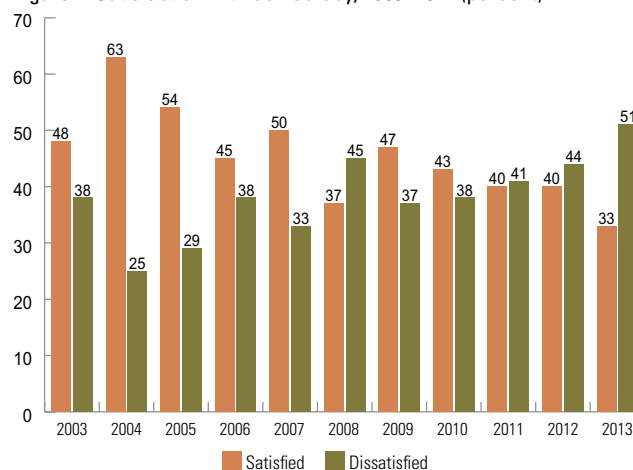
The specific question asked of respondents was: 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy is working in South Africa?', with responses captured on a five-point scale ranging from 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied'.

National trends in democratic satisfaction, 2003–2013

Figure 1 provides trends in the adult population who expressed satisfaction and dissatisfaction in each round of interviewing over the last decade.¹

In examining the 2003 survey results, we found that before the 2004 national and provincial elections, 48% of the adult population were satisfied with democracy and 38% were discontent. Between 2003 and 2008, a slight reversal in trends was apparent. The 2008 SASAS results showed that, for the first time, a greater share of people were dissatisfied than satisfied (45% versus 37%).

Figure 1: Satisfaction with democracy, 2003–2012 (percent)



Source: HSRC South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) 2003–2013.

Note: The neutral category is not presented in the graph, but accounts for between 12–18% in each year of interviewing.

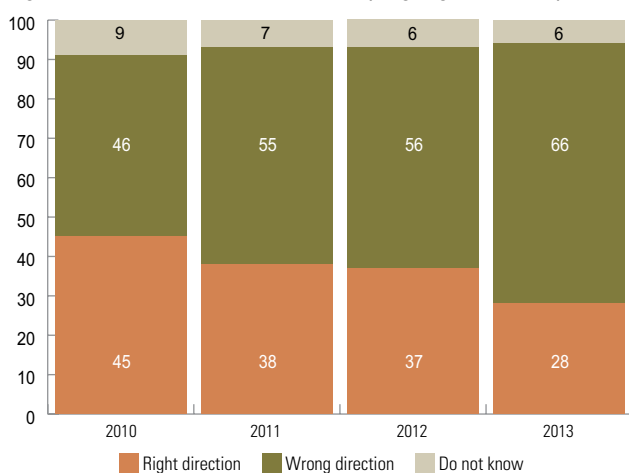
At the time of the SASAS round in late 2013, 51% of the participants expressed their discontent, while only 33% were satisfied with the way democracy is working. This reflected a complete reversal of the 2003 results, and was the lowest recorded level of satisfaction with democracy since the establishment of the SASAS series.

To further assess the public's view of democratic performance in general, survey respondents were required to evaluate whether they felt that things in South Africa were going in the right or in the wrong direction.

¹ Neutral responses to this question are not included in the graph and as a result the percentages do not add up to 100 percent.

In late 2013, less than a third (28%) indicated that the nation was heading in the right direction while a majority (66%) reported believing that the country was heading in the wrong direction (Figure 2). The share believing that the country was going in the right direction fell from 45% in 2010 to around 38% in 2011 and 2012 and to barely more than a quarter in 2013.²

Figure 2: Views of the direction the country is going, 2010–2013 (percent)

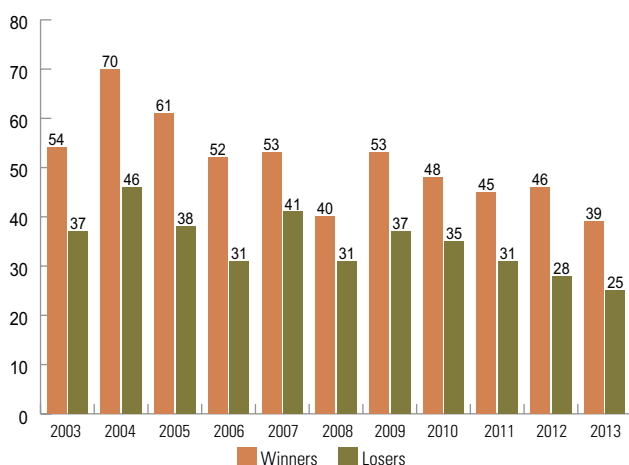


Source: HSRC South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) 2010–2013.

Does it matter whether a party is big or small?

From the patterns and trends presented in Figure 3, we found that those who have vested interest in, and who voted for, the ANC were more satisfied with the way democracy was working. In each round of interviewing since 2003, satisfaction with democracy was consistently higher among the winners of democratic elections than those on the losing side. These differences were all statistically significant.

Figure 3: Satisfaction with democracy among winners and losers, 2003–2013



Source: HSRC South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) 2003–2013.

Note: The values presented in the graph combine the percentage of respondents who said they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied'. 'Winners' and 'losers' are based on those who voted for the governing party in the last general election or feel closest to the ruling party. This effectively translates into ANC versus other party supporters given that the ANC has won each successive national election since the transition to democracy.

However, it was also apparent that satisfaction with democracy has declined for winners and losers alike. In the case of those supporting the ruling party, satisfaction levels have fallen 15 percentage points over the decade, from 54% to 39%, while satisfaction declined by 12 percentage points for those supporting opposition parties.

This is an important finding as it suggests that citizen satisfaction with the performance of democracy has begun to diminish even for those identifying with the ruling party. This implies that there are mounting concerns about aspects of how the democratic system is working, irrespective of political persuasion.

Satisfaction with economic performance

There is international evidence lending credence to the importance of economic satisfaction in shaping views on the performance of democracy in general, specifically in terms of unemployment, inflationary pressure and making ends meet.

Barely a fifth of those who were unhappy with the state of the economy voiced satisfaction with democracy, compared to between 70–80% of those who had a more sanguine economic outlook. This pattern has remained relatively stable over the last seven years.

Personal living standards also appear to matter for evaluations of democratic performance. For instance, people indicating that life has improved personally in the last five years offered more positive evaluations of democratic performance than those saying personal living standards had remained unchanged or worsened. Nonetheless, there was a downturn in satisfaction with democracy among those who reported upward social mobility, with satisfaction levels falling from 66% in 2010 to 49% in 2013.

Conclusion

The rise in democratic discontent has been accompanied by diminishing confidence in core political institutions and lingering disappointment in relation to issues such as job creation, the reduction of crime and corruption, as well as the provision of low cost housing.

Views on national and personal economic performance appear to partly explain the reason for this growing discontent with the performance of democracy, with those generally unhappy with the state of the economy or feeling that their lives have not been materially improving generally offering more negative assessments.

These increasingly unfavourable views of democratic performance could be interpreted as a sign of the emergence of a more critical citizen who is concerned with the accountability of institutions and office-bearers. This, in turn, could be a positive development for South African democracy and civic culture. ■

Authors: Benjamin Roberts and Jarè Struwig, SASAS coordinators; Steven Gordon, PhD researcher trainee; Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery programme, HSRC.

² The remaining 6 percent provided 'do not know' responses.

THE FEMALE CONDOM – PROBLEMATIC PLASTIC OR CHOICE PROTECTION?

We know for a fact that women have a greater physical and social risk of contracting HIV in sub-Saharan Africa than men. We also know that the female condom is currently the only HIV and other sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention method available that places the power of choice in women's hands. Yet, a study conducted among students in the Western Cape showed that both men and women preferred male condoms, reports *Emma Arogundade*.



The study involved an HSRC evaluation of a peer education intervention funded by The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. It was implemented by the Western Cape departments of health and basic education, with technical assistance and monitoring being provided by the Centre for the Support of Peer Education.

The group of 575 sexually active learners preferred the male condom as a prophylactic for males (53%) and females (26%). The second choice for males was the female condom (16%) but for females it only ranked third.

This prompted the question whether this outcome was due to the availability of the female condom or to perceptions around its use. Only five million female condoms were distributed in South Africa in 2012 compared to 492 million male condoms.

To answer these questions, we undertook a review of popular and academic literature and found that more attention needed to be paid to making the female condom both available and desirable. Popular literature included news articles and opinion pieces, while academic literature included journal articles and policy-focused research reports that dealt with the social rather than the medical side of research into female condoms.

History of the female condom in South Africa

The female condom was introduced into South Africa in 1998 as part of a national family planning programme, and has the

second largest female condom distribution programme in the world. The brand that is most commonly available in clinics in South Africa is Female Condom II, a soft polyurethane 17cm long sheath that has a fixed ring on the outer open side and a loose ring on the inner closed side to help with insertion into the vagina.

To introduce it to the public healthcare system, the Wits Reproductive Health and Research Unit and the Department of Health chose a national sample of public healthcare sites and invited staff to attend a three-day training course on how to use and distribute the device. This may have had the unintended consequence of making the female condom seem intimidating as it required training to use and to distribute, and because distribution points were limited to trained professionals.

Although this perception has changed over time and the female condom has become more available, old attitudes still linger. This launch scenario should also be contrasted with the approach to education and availability of the male condom, which was heavily promoted in the 1990s and beyond through public education, training and marketing, with the emphasis on its lifestyle enhancing qualities.



Difficulty inserting the female condom remains the most often cited reason for not using it again.

Availability and knowledge but not pleasure

The majority of the popular literature on the female condom explained its history and advocated various ways to increase uptake by women. The benefits of the female condom are widely reflected in policy research but this is very seldom reflected in the news media. These benefits include that it is made from polyurethane rather than latex, that the outer ring provides additional protection against STIs other than HIV, that under certain circumstances it can be used up to four times and that a woman does not need to be aroused in order to use it.

What is missing from the advocacy is an emphasis on the reported increased sexual pleasure that both partners experience once they have learnt how to use it properly, which could be a major selling point.

Only two literature pieces, both originating from NGOs, wrote about the lack of availability of female condoms. In fact, the NGO sector believed this was such an issue that in 2008, the Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Project held a national dialogue with other NGOs in the sector, propelling access to the female condom into the public realm as a human rights issue. Despite the efforts of these NGOs, newspaper reports from 2010 reflected that promises for increased access to female condoms, especially because of the World Cup, were never met, raising some doubts about current assurances from the government to increase procurement and distribution.

Price, desirability and power

Policy research also pointed to the high price of the female condom, which cost approximately 10 times as much to produce as the male condom, excluding the costs to public health of transport and distribution within South Africa's borders.

One potential solution suggested that the largest buyers of the female condom – South Africa, India and Brazil – should band together to buy in bulk to reduce the unit cost. Though not reflected in the literature, an expanded market could be achieved through marketing and education, which could also increase the numbers produced and thereby decrease the per-unit cost.

Much of the academic research explored reasons why women might not have felt confident or comfortable using a female condom. Early reports from 1998 emphasised that the difficulties for women revolved around insertion and the noise of the 'plastic Jiffy bag' that occurred during intercourse.

These early reactions were based on Female Condom I, a latex condom, and the noise has been reduced with the introduction of Female Condom II. Despite this, early stereotypes persist. Difficulty inserting the female condom remains the most often cited reason for not using it again after the first attempt. However, studies report that couples who persisted indicated there was increased sexual satisfaction for both parties, with the added benefit that the inner ring of Female Condom II provided additional stimulation for the male partner.

Women are inserting and using the female condom without their partner's knowledge.



Another social barrier is the difficulty heterosexual women feel in negotiating the use of male condoms with their partners. Despite this, one study has turned up evidence that women are inserting and using the female condom without their partner's knowledge, indicating that the female condom could present an option for women's self-protection that no other currently available barrier method does.

Where to from here?

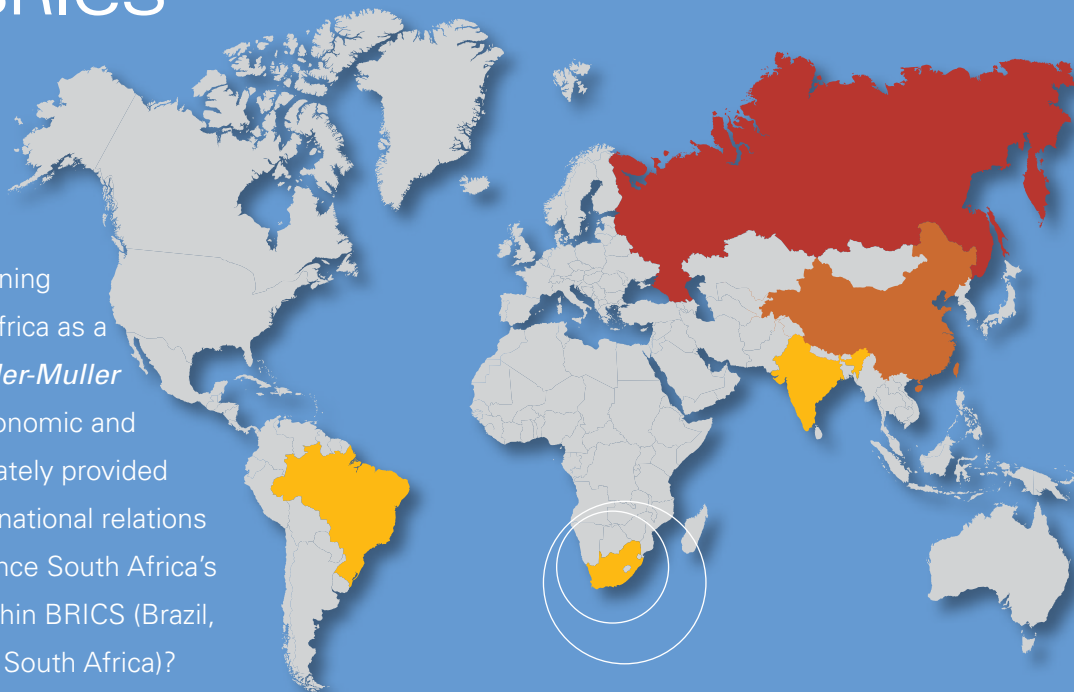
More recently, PATH, an NGO that describes itself as an 'international health organisation driving transformative innovation to save lives', conducted research with women across the globe to develop a new women's condom that is easier to insert, use and remove and that provides more sensation for both partners. In promoting the use of female condoms, it initiated a global female condom day in 2012 to promote knowledge about and the use of female condoms. It had a positive result, with most major newspapers carrying articles about female condoms in 2013.

To promote the use of the female condom, these lifesaving devices need to be made more available to women by expanding the programme of government spending and increasing avenues of distribution. A concerted effort is needed to make people aware of the benefits of the female condom, not only from a public health perspective, but from the point of view that they enhance pleasure and place the power of choice in women's hands. ■

Author: Emma Arogundade, PhD intern, Human and Social Development programme, HSRC.

FOREIGN POLICY: ADVANCING SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL INTEREST WITHIN BRICS

The nature of South Africa's constitutional democracy is taken as a starting point in determining the interests of South Africa as a nation. But *Narnia Bohler-Muller* asks: are these socioeconomic and political interests adequately provided for in the country's international relations strategies so as to advance South Africa's constitutional values within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)?



These values are expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa as follows:

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

Given this starting point, valid questions can be asked as to whether an African Agenda pertaining to continental integration, and the diplomacy of ubuntu, are international relations strategies that adequately take into account South Africa's national socioeconomic and political interests; and whether current policies sufficiently advance the national values of dignity, equality, freedom, democracy and the rule of law as articulated in the constitution.

The main problem appears to be that South Africa is trying to serve too many international and regional agendas and is thus overextended in its global engagements. This overextension contributes to the lack of a clear foreign policy focus.

South Africa is trying to serve too many international and regional agendas and is thus overextended in its global engagements.



National Development Plan

The National Development Plan: Vision for 2030 (NDP) argues that the formulation of foreign policy should be informed by principles that both reflect and support national interests. The three main concerns emerging from the NDP are that South Africa needs to grow its economy; reduce poverty; and improve the quality of life for South Africans – the 'better life for all' principle embodied in the preamble to the constitution.

In broad terms, we need to address inequalities in South Africa. How do we do this while building a capable and developmental state?

Chapter seven of the NDP deals with South Africa's 'place in the world'. It says the country must honestly re-evaluate its regional and global positioning to ensure that foreign policy objectives help it achieve its constitutional vision of a better life for all. The NDP suggests that a more consistent,

less ambiguous approach to international relations could be achieved by adopting the principle that the national interest is paramount at all times.

Despite referring to 'the world', the focus is almost exclusively on economic diplomacy in the context of Africa and regionalism. There is very little reference to the complexity of South Africa's myriad global interests, including the IBSA Dialogue Forum – an international tripartite grouping for promoting international co-operation among India, Brazil and South Africa – and BRICS.

The African Agenda and the place of BRICS

South Africa is a leading champion of the African Agenda that aims to end the marginalisation of the continent from the rest of the world. One way of doing this is to use BRICS as a platform to raise the African voice.

However, each BRICS member country has its own regional agenda and economic and geopolitical interests to protect. There is also the new 'scramble for Africa' to consider, which has resulted in intense competition among BRICS members for natural resources on the continent.

The foreign exploitation of these resources can be damaging to the continent and does not necessarily advance the interests of Africans. On the other hand, if governed well by Africans, it is a good opportunity for development on the continent.

In promoting its African Agenda, South Africa has proclaimed itself both the leader and bridge-builder on the continent, and through its membership of BRICS, the primary gateway to Africa. This stance has been challenged, even though South Africa was successful in securing the chair of the African Union (AU) Commission in 2012.

Given the challenges of unilaterally adopting a political and economic leadership role in Africa (a role that could equally be fulfilled by Nigeria, for instance) and the lack of clarity on how central the values of democracy and human rights are to this process, it would be preferable to adopt a more nuanced approach with respect to global and continental priorities. This would mean positioning national interests at the centre of the debate rather than using the interests of BRICS or any other multilateral body as a yardstick.

This more balanced and nuanced approach can be glimpsed in what the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) calls a 'diplomacy of ubuntu' that foregrounds common humanity, relationship-building, interdependence and interconnectedness.

Diplomacy of ubuntu

The values that inspire and guide South Africa as a nation are deeply rooted in the long years of struggle for liberation. As a beneficiary of many acts of selfless solidarity in the past, South Africa strongly believes that what it wishes for its people should be what it wishes for the citizens of the world. The ultimate aim should be to contribute towards the building of a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world.

The international relations department's policy states that the philosophy of ubuntu reflects the idea that people affirm their own humanity when they affirm the humanity of others. This approach should inform South Africa's

actions within multilateral fora including the UN, AU and BRICS. This could be done by ensuring a more collaborative environment that emphasises participation, collaboration and consultation. The policy defines ubuntu in this particular context as the 'recognition of the interconnectedness and interdependency of humanity'.

Thus, South African foreign policy should be framed by respect for common humanity and the diversity of nations.

The South African Council on International Relations

The establishment of the South African Council on International Relations (SACOIR) indicates a move towards enhanced participation of the people in the state's foreign policy processes.

The council was created as a domestic advisory body on international relations to further the international relations department's objective of maximising domestic participation in such matters. It is meant to serve as a consultative forum in which non-state actors and government:

- provide a platform for generating public debate on foreign policy;
- provide a consultative forum for regular review of South Africa's foreign policy; and
- advise the minister of international relations and cooperation.

The active and substantive participation of civil society and the private sector in the formulation of international relations may change the game by further entrenching thinking around the interconnectedness of national interests and regional and international agendas.

**It is not necessary to sacrifice
the national vision as
encompassed in the constitution
in the pursuit of global
recognition and influence.**



A principled approach

There is no hard and fast rule, except to ensure that South Africa's foreign relations and priorities do not stray far from its domestic commitments to democracy and the values underpinning political and socioeconomic rights to ensure a principled approach to determining South Africa's 'place in the world'. It is not necessary to sacrifice the national vision as encompassed in the constitution in the pursuit of global recognition and influence.

It is submitted that the diplomacy of ubuntu as articulated by DIRCO has the potential to balance these national, continental and international interests in a manner that benefits all South Africans. ■

Author: Professor Narnia Bohler-Muller, acting executive director, Democracy and Governance programme, HSRC.

BUT IS IT AFFORDABLE?

A CASE STUDY OF SOCIAL HOUSING IN ATLANTIS

Social housing only functions correctly under specific conditions, a study on a low-income housing scheme in Atlantis near Blaauwberg, Cape Town, has shown. In this case study, *Catherine Ndinda et al* explore the reasons why.

We understand social housing to mean a rental or co-operative housing option for people with a low income, managed by an institutional framework that ensures it is held as a public good for the benefit of the poor. For an institution to qualify for accreditation to provide social housing it must be a legal entity, accredited by the designated regulatory authority and established with the primary objective of developing and/or managing housing stock that has been funded through grant programmes. Low-income groups in the social housing policy are described as 'those whose household income is below R7 500 per month'. Social housing institutions must be financially viable, with a low rate of default, high repayment rates and good management practices.

Although social housing implementation in South Africa began in the late 1990s, guided by the 1994 housing policy and strategy, social housing policy and regulations have been developed over the years. The social housing regulations gazetted in 2012 are the result of the mistakes made and the lessons learnt over the years of implementation in South Africa. The regulations list three types of social housing institutions: corporate entities that conduct their business on a non-profit basis, municipal entities and housing co-operatives.

Social housing differs from housing built through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which are subsidised dwellings built under the 1994 RDP housing policy.

Financing social housing

Since 1994, social housing has been financed by the former National Department of Housing, now the Department of Human Settlements (DHS), under the Housing Subsidy Scheme (HSS). The HSS makes provision for both non-credit-linked and credit-linked subsidies.

Individuals who earn below R1 500 per month qualify for non-credit-linked subsidies. If they earn more than that, they are required to make a contribution towards their housing.

The process is as follows: those who qualify for social housing are required to rent a unit first, and then apply for a loan to purchase their units. Households who earn from R1 501 to R3 500 are required to make a once-off payment of R2 479 as a contribution to access subsidised housing.

With this scheme there is a shift from a single-pronged financing approach to a multi-pronged approach that includes subsidy and debt financing, as well as public-private partnerships. Debt financing for social housing institutions is provided by the National Housing Finance Corporation (NHFC), a development finance institution established by the South African government to fund and facilitate the development of affordable housing. In this capacity the NHFC provides direct loans to social housing institutions to assist in the provision of rental housing.

In this case study, the NHFC provided a loan of R19.1 million to the Housing Association of Blaauwberg (HAB) in 2000 as part of the Housing Institutions Development Fund (HIDF) for the purpose of building units in Atlantis, Western Cape.

After numerous failed attempts to ensure that the HAB serviced its debt, the NHFC sued for the outstanding payments in 2010 and requested the high court to grant the sequestration order. The court granted the request and the units were handed over to a liquidator. Given that tenants were already living in the units, it became important to establish the affordability of these houses. The NHFC commissioned the HAB to do an audit survey to this effect.

Up to 85% of residents across all unit types had defaulted on their rent payments.



Affordability levels

The findings of the HSRC audit survey suggested that out of the planned 802 units, the HAB had only completed 676 units. The tenants were expected to rent for a period of four years and then take out a loan to purchase their unit.

Tenants responded positively to the survey, with 614 out of the 676 units participating. The profiles of the tenants were as follows: more than half of the tenants were married (54.9%); about 78.8% had secondary level education; and 46% were unemployed. Different rental amounts were charged for different unit types (Table 1 on page 19); up to 85% of residents across all unit types had defaulted on their rent payments.

When housing costs exceed 30% of the household income, it becomes unaffordable.



The reasons for defaulting included difficulty in making the repayments, fewer working hours, unemployment, illness, rent increases and unexpected utility bills. Tenants who could not pay incited others to stop their rent payments.

While 21.03% of the residents had a monthly household income of less than R1 000, the majority (58.57%) had a monthly household income of between R1 000 and R5 000. A small proportion (6.47%) had a monthly household income of between R5 000 and R10 000, and an even smaller proportion (0.48%) had a monthly household income of between R10 000 and R20 000.

Studies on housing affordability suggest that when housing costs exceed 30% of the household income it becomes unaffordable. This was the case with the majority of the HAB tenants, even though the rental amounts charged by the HAB were below market rates. In addition, the tenants had been on a rent boycott for some years and refused to resume rent payments.

Table 1: Rentals charged by unit type

Unit Type	Area (M ²)	Rent charged # (R/Month)	Rent charged* (R/Month)
Low spec	30	210	280
Semi-detached	30	450	550
Detached	30	480	600
Semi-detached	40	630	700
Detached	40	650	750
Semi-detached	54	740	800
Detached	54	750	870

Source: Ndinda, C; Mustapha, N; Davids, Y.D. 2013. Audit Survey of the Housing Association of Blaauwberg. Pretoria: Human Science Research Council

#Stands occupied before 2002 *Stands occupied after 2002

Given the complexities around the HAB, the need to repay the loan, the rent boycott, liquidation and refusal to vacate the units, the solution to this particular problem requires intense stakeholder involvement and trade-offs have to be made. The only way the majority of tenants can afford the units is if they have a steady stream of income, which is exacerbated by the fact that in the nearby industrial area of Atlantis, factories have been shutting down.

The only way the majority of tenants can afford the units is if they have a steady stream of income.



From this case study it is clear that social housing can only work under conditions of high levels of employment and steady income, but the rent-to-buy option is not feasible in areas where unemployment is high and employment options are few. Providing social housing in areas where subsidised (RDP) housing is also provided to beneficiaries of non credit-linked subsidies remains problematic. Although consumer education might be provided to explain the responsibilities of social housing tenants, when unable to pay tenants will always allude to the fact that beneficiaries of other housing subsidy options do not pay rent. This was among the reasons for the rent boycott in Atlantis extension 12. ■

Authors: Dr Catherine Ndinda, African research fellow, HSRC; Charles Hongoro, director, Population Health, Health Systems and Innovation research programme, HSRC; Dr Nazeem Mustapha, chief research specialist, Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators, HSRC; and Dr Derek Davids, senior research specialist, Democracy and Governance research programme, HSRC.

Providing social housing in areas where subsidised housing is also provided... remains problematic.





DOING THINGS BETTER IN MARGINALISED RURAL LOCALITIES

In almost all low-income countries 'rurality' is associated with geographic regions trapped in backwardness, poverty and underdevelopment. Rural areas are hardly seen as territories for producing new ideas and modern knowledge, unless they host a world-class university or research facility. *Hlokoma Mangqalaza* and *Peter Jacobs* document how new ideas to do things better can improve the quality of life in rural areas.

Marlow Agricultural High School, located in rural Eastern Cape, represents one example of new ways to improve educational programmes and share this across local municipal boundaries. Founded in 1931, Marlow is one of a small number of schools that specialises in providing learners – recruited mainly from surrounding rural settlements – with agricultural schooling in preparation for tertiary education or post-school farming careers.

Its rural location on the outskirts of Cradock, where there is enough farmland, has a unique advantage for Marlow's innovation activities. An experimental farm is attached to the school. The school's forward-looking leadership is constantly searching for new ideas and practices to enhance the curriculum and its pertinence in addressing developmental challenges.

Marlow's agricultural science courses include a practice-oriented stream on wool shearing, classing and artificial insemination of animals. Training also covers the mechanics of agricultural machinery, how to use various state-of-the-art farming technologies and efficient farm management skills.

Innovation activities at this school rely on inputs from a variety of outside role-players – a feature of durable innovation networks. The actors that support Marlow naturally share a common interest in agriculture. Experts from the National Wool Growers Association and Mohair SA, among other private farming organisations, periodically

visit the school to help teach key courses in sheep farming.

The school is well resourced and takes learners to career expos hosted by universities with prominent agricultural science faculties, like the University of Fort Hare and University of Free State, thus facilitating their learning about shifts in post-school career options, especially in highly skilled agricultural jobs. The government supports Marlow's innovative educational programme through the district department of agriculture, regularly inviting the school to information fairs for farmers and periodically recruiting learners for short-term internships with the department.

Marlow interacts with a similar school, Phandulwazi Agricultural High School located outside Alice, roughly 200 kilometres away from Cradock. Even though agricultural science has been the mainstay of both schools, before 2003 neither school had any user-friendly agricultural practice textbook. Marlow and Phandulwazi jointly developed training materials and guidelines to close this resource gap to deliver a core subject.

Since the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement by the Department of Education, both schools have received their needed education and training materials. However, according to one senior educator, the number of visits for an external review of the quality of learner assessments has been reduced from twice a year to only once a year. In the past, the visits enabled a wider range of interactive learning activities.

Resource inequalities across the two schools explain why their innovative capabilities and performance differ. Phandulwazi is a no-fee school without its own transportation and limited funds to afford frequent trips for face-to-face interactions with learners and teachers at Marlow. The school also lacks sufficient qualified educators, especially those who are able to conduct useful practical experiments at the school's experimental farm.

Geographic remoteness and low population density are defining features of rurality.



How do forms of proximity affect innovation?

Geographic remoteness and low population density are defining features of rurality. Prolific scholarly debate centres on the meanings and forms of proximity and its significance for innovation. It implies that physical closeness is one form of spatial proximity. New ways of doing things better also depend on how close or far apart actors in the innovation space are in terms of experience, organisational culture and other less tangible forms of connectedness. Recent studies on territorial innovation systems reveal that non-spatial factors can stimulate innovative activities, even in marginalised rural contexts.

Information sharing and interactive learning form the bedrock of innovation. This process in turn rests on shared values, habits and legal rules, collectively known as a community's rules of the game. These are all elements of the institutional framework with overlapping informal (cultural norms) and formal (laws) dimensions.

Institutions are not static, but evolve over time. Strong institutional proximity means that stable conditions exist for interactive learning and the discovery of new things. However, when the 'rules of the game' are too tight, as in highly formalised institutional systems, it can impede exploration of new ideas and stifle innovation. Neatly balancing closeness and distance is an inherent difficulty in all forms of non-spatial proximity: institutional, cognitive, organisational and social.

Non-spatial factors can stimulate innovative activities, even in marginalised rural contexts.



When will innovations promote rural development?

Traditionally, African migrants used conventional banking or wire-service intermediaries for remittance transfers to their families in remote rural villages. When the rural family

wanted to claim the cash, they incurred additional travel costs to the nearest town where a branch of the financial intermediary was typically located. But now modern mobile telecommunications have become platforms for innovative financial services to rural communities in Africa.

Without investment in leading-edge ICT infrastructure, the broader societal benefits of this innovation might not materialise. Knowledge of how to use cellphones for banking transactions is fundamental to fully tapping all the benefits of this service, which is similar to interactive text messaging or social media messaging.

Rural communities also benefit from various sustainable development innovations. A case in point is the need for moving away from the dependency on wood burning for indoor cooking and heating. This harmful source of energy supply is positively associated with deforestation and respiratory illnesses. Although the introduction of fuel-efficient and environmentally-friendly stoves in poor rural communities makes sense from a sustainability viewpoint, communities often reject such innovations.

Cost might be a factor, but is far from the only reason why poor rural communities have not adopted fuel-efficient stoves supposedly aimed at improving their quality of life. In India, for example, expensive water purification technologies simply made clean water unaffordable. For sustainability-enhancing innovations to gain traction in poor rural communities, direct participation of targeted adopters and users of innovations in the design and implementation of innovation is required.

Innovations (must) start from the developmental needs and aspirations of rural communities.



In summary, this brief evidence review shows that innovation activities in rural areas cut across many sectors and involve multiple actors. Rural realities require a wider analytical lens that reaches beyond the restrictive boundaries of traditional farm-based innovations. Innovations that enhance quality of life are more likely to produce the desired improvements if innovations start from the developmental needs and aspirations of rural communities. A territorially-bounded view of rural innovation activities yields a comprehensive and rich picture of how innovation might be harnessed to spur broad-based rural development. It contains fundamental lessons for new area-based planning policies and coordinated developmental interventions. ■

Authors: Hlokomangqalaza, junior researcher, Economic, Performance and Development (EPD) research programme, HSRC; Dr Peter Jacobs, research specialist, EPD.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH PROFESSOR LINDA RICHTER

Professor Richter, the newly appointed director of South Africa's first Centre of Excellence in Human Development, the only such centre for the social sciences and humanities, chats to *HSRC Review* about her appointment, the critical role of centres of excellence and what the new centre aims to achieve.

How does a centre of excellence (CoE) come about?

The Department of Science and Technology and the National Research Foundation (DST/NRF) Centres of Excellence programme was launched in 2004 as a mechanism to increase scientific productivity by providing outstanding researchers working together with secure and stable funding to support strategic, long-term research. At that time, nine CoEs were established and, in 2013, an announcement was made that five more CoE grants would be awarded, with one being reserved for the human and social sciences. Each university was restricted to two applications for the five centres. After an initial screening of the phase I applications, short-listed groups were requested to submit full proposals. A Centre of Excellence in the Human and Social Sciences was awarded jointly to Wits University and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and the two proposals – one in child development and the other in livelihoods and health – were merged into a CoE in Human Development. The CoE is housed at Wits and I have been appointed by both Wits and UKZN as the director.

Who or what comprises this CoE?

The Wits application was supported by the HSRC and included the Medical Research Council (MRC), UKZN and Stellenbosch University. The UKZN proposal was supported by the University of Cape Town (UCT) and included the universities of the Free State and Zululand. As a result of the new merged focus of the CoE in Human Development, a reconfiguration of proposed partners is necessary. With the guidance of an executive committee of lead researchers in the CoE, I am drafting a framework for the merged centre that will be presented to the CoE Advisory Board and, based on discussion with the partners listed in the original submission and some potential new partners, a smaller number of key collaborating institutions will be included in the CoE for Human Development. But funding for research and student awards is not restricted to the key collaborating institutions in the CoE. A process of application for funding is being developed and will be advertised by October 2014.

What are the criteria to be included as a member of a CoE?

Research excellence and leadership. The centre currently comprises four A-rated and six B-rated scientists, and a South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) chair, together

with their collaborators, local and international. Their areas of expertise have sufficient affinity with one another to facilitate unique inter-disciplinary research that is internationally competitive. Each activity area of the CoE is led by an established researcher doing innovative work while, at the same time, creating a research training environment for doctoral and post-doctoral fellows. These research leaders will reach out to scholars at universities and other research environments working in areas congruent with the aims of the CoE to strengthen capacity and diversity in the particular research area. So the intended 'membership' of the CoE is very wide.

Why do you have natural and social scientists in the centre, given its focus on human development?

One of the aims of the centre is to promote interdisciplinary work. In this case, the study of human development requires knowledge generated by the natural and the social sciences as well as the humanities. Human development is biological and social, driven by both genetics and environment, with consequences for health, education, productivity, well-being and social cohesion. Human development cannot be investigated from one perspective only. Even the nature of human development is debated by philosophers, sociologists, economists and others.

You throw the net quite wide – what disciplines and research areas will you cover?

Yes, the net is wide because we want to bring in different points of view. Nonetheless, we are concentrating on child growth, health and development, the wellbeing of children and families, violence and livelihoods. In these areas, we want to contribute to scientific advancement through methodological innovations and to policy through the evaluation of various interventions. Further, because the quintessential characteristic of development is that it is dynamic, we are focusing on the study of change using methods that allow for longitudinal perspectives. These methods might come from clinical medicine, economics, demography, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, psychology or epidemiology, among others.

Explain the thinking around 'lifecycle development'

We know quite a lot about individual development across the lifespan from conception to death – although we continue to



learn more and more – but we know much less about the implications of individual development across generations. This knowledge has only recently become available through the long-term follow-up of individuals and their children. For example, one of the recent findings of our Consortium of Health Oriented Research in Transitioning Societies (COHORTS) group was that teenage mothers were more likely to have preterm births, smaller babies and children who didn't grow as well as they should. They achieved fewer years of schooling than the children of mothers in their twenties, and they were more at risk of diabetes as adults. Conditions and events in the lives of individuals have consequences across generations, and these need to be taken into account in designing interventions and in calculating the cost-benefit of one intervention against another. The COHORTS group is a collaboration among the five largest and longest running birth cohort studies in low- and middle-income countries. Birth to Twenty in Johannesburg is one of these birth cohort studies. The combined sample of these studies is more than 23 000, and two of the studies, in Guatemala and India, have follow-up from before birth in pregnancy to ages in the late 40s. Studies such as these are providing a better understanding of lifecycle or intergenerational effects.

Interventions at every stage could have benefits, but if a government has to decide where to get the best bang for its buck, where would you put it and why?

Studies of this question are one of the aims of the CoE. However, with respect to human capacity, that is, achieved education and adult earnings, and early interventions, there is solid evidence that interventions in the preschool years are more effective and less costly than interventions implemented later. These early interventions include planned and safe pregnancy and delivery, good nutrition, protection by a stable and secure family, and opportunities to learn.

Will you be starting from ground zero, doing original research, or will you use existing research and look for the gaps?

Collaborators in the CoE will be doing both primary and secondary research, i.e. collecting information from scratch and using existing datasets for new analysis. Because South Africa has such rich sources of longitudinal data – birth cohort, panel studies and repeat cross-sectional studies conducted by

universities, science councils and Statistics South Africa – we would like to use these databases maximally to produce both scientifically original research and research that is of value for policy and programmes in South Africa and elsewhere. For example, the HSRC has both SABSSM (the nationally representative HIV household survey, conducted in 2002, 2005, 2008 and 2012), and the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) conducted annually since 2003. I was part of the original group that started Birth to Twenty more than 24 years ago, and both Wits and UKZN support large community health and population research sites with regular data collection. Stats SA conducts a number of regular nationally-representative household surveys that are an invaluable source of information about change in South Africa.

Will you be leaving the HSRC to direct the CoE?

My mandatory retirement from the HSRC is at the end of June 2015. Until then, I am being seconded for 60% of time to Wits and UKZN. This will enable me to start the CoE and complete existing projects at the HSRC. After that, I will be joining Wits full-time.

How will the CoE be funded? How will this affect other organisations, such as the HSRC, that are playing in the same field and competing for the same piece of the pie?

The funding for the CoE is in the region of R10 million a year, initially for five years, but all going well, for 10 years or longer. These funds are allocated to administrative costs, mainly to support collaboration, dissemination and the like, postgraduate student support and research. The CoE will try to attract additional funds for both student support and research, and these funds will be allocated to partners. Because the CoE is a virtual organisation comprising a network between groups, it won't be competing with its constituent organisations. Rather, it will try facilitating their application for grants and commissions when a broader partnership of organisations or people within the CoE is needed to undertake the work. The CoE will only directly apply for additional grant funds when partners are interested but don't have the capacity to lead, and the CoE can pull together sufficient resources to make the bid. The CoE intends to grow expertise and capacity, build resources and add value for work on human development, not redistribute it! ■



EDUCATION POLICY VERSUS PRACTICE: A GREAT DIVIDE

A central question in education is why policy changes do not positively affect what happens inside the classroom. *Esther Ramani* and *Michael Joseph* challenge the (mis)conception that there is a direct and symmetrical relation between policy and practice.

A leading educationist of the 1970s in the UK wrote about the ‘invisible curriculum’: the kind of transient talk that occurs between learners, and between teachers and learners.

Such classroom talk promotes learning of new concepts and competencies, but lies hidden from public view. This is unlike the overt curriculum, of policy and curriculum statements, proposals to professionalise teaching, textbooks, lessons plans, teacher manuals and examination question papers. Challenging the misconception of a direct and symmetrical relation between policy and practice is the first step in real educational change.

Focus on everyday knowledge

A 2013 classroom research project funded by the National Research Foundation and recently completed by the HSRC and the Universities of Pretoria and Limpopo, confirmed earlier research findings from rural and township schools in Limpopo and Gauteng: a pervasive focus on oracy and on the everyday knowledge of children rather than scientific and academic concepts. The introduction of literacy in both the home languages of children and in English was delayed and tasks involving lower-order thinking dominated. In addition, a discrete approach to language development (separate skills

and separate languages) and a heavy emphasis on ‘teacher talk’ were notable.

Particularly alarming was a decontextualised and regimented approach to literacy development in the teaching of phonics as a daily 15-minute practice. Teachers claimed this was in accordance with instructions in the Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) throughout the Foundation Phase.

Teaching in the home language doesn’t guarantee success

Abram Mashatole (2014), an MA researcher on our team, described the following episode in his dissertation: a teacher, unable to explain odd and even numbers, converts her numeracy lesson into a literacy lesson by getting her learners to recite the numbers in Sepedi and then writing them up on the board.

If teachers’ conceptual understanding (subject knowledge) is not strong enough, they resort to what has been called ‘safe talk’. This expression used by Nancy Hornberger and Keith Chick (2001) refers to talk that focuses on aspects not central to concept development, such as spelling, punctuation and handwriting. It is clear that simply using the learners’ own language as a medium of instruction does not guarantee concept development.

Phonics is a method for teaching reading and writing the English language by developing learners’ phonemic awareness – the ability to hear, identify and manipulate basic units of language or phonemes – in order to teach the correspondence between these sounds and the spelling patterns (graphemes) that represent them. The objective of phonics, according to Wikipedia, is to enable beginner readers to decode new written words by sounding out the sound-spelling patterns. It is often contrasted with whole language.

Phonics can be very useful if taught in an embedded way and responsively, when children mispronounce or misspell words rather than in a routine fashion (Esther Ramani).

What our research showed was that even when the learners' own language was used as medium of instruction in Grades 1–3, the learners did not seem to be acquiring new knowledge or skills. Instead they were caught in cycles of boring repetition of teachers' assertions. Very little independent reading or writing or problem-solving was taking place.

So, policies that simply argue for the use of learners' home languages without addressing the issue of concept and cognitive development are doomed to be ineffective for school achievement.



Current teacher training models are failing the country's teachers.

Ineffective teacher training

It seems to us that current teacher training models are failing the country's teachers. Short, irregular and top-down workshops focus on administering CAPS rather than on teachers engaging with its recommendations from their own knowledge and experience base.

The highly-scripted CAPS lesson plans given to teachers have deprived them of their own agency and robbed them of their initiative. Teacher training seems to be based on a replacement model, where teachers are required to replace one set of classroom practices with another every time policy is changed, but with little effect.



The highly-scripted CAPS lesson plans given to teachers have deprived them of their own agency and robbed them of their initiative.

Turning the tables on teaching

In the NRF project, we devised a different way of handling the contentious relation between policy and practice. Apart from researching current classroom practices taught by the regular teachers in the classrooms of the Foundation Phase in the Limpopo study, we devised intervention lessons taught by us as the academics.

School teachers were invited to observe our lessons and comment on any aspect. This role reversal enabled us researcher-turned-teachers to try out a number of innovations with the same learners, using the same materials and with the same resources but more importantly, enabled teachers to critically engage with our classroom routines and practices, in the light of their own thinking.

For example, we used the names of students in a Grade 1 English first additional language class to bring about phonemic awareness. While it was clear all the learners could write their names, teachers were still focusing on single sounds and had

been instructed not to progress to consonant clusters (*kg, st, etc.*) until all the single sounds had been taught.

First, we invited students to write their names. They could barely contain their excitement at being asked to take over the teacher's place at the board and enthusiastically participated in this public writing activity.

Surnames like *Mokgoatshana* (containing a three-letter cluster *tsh*) appeared on the board. Students were then asked to group themselves according to the first letter/sound in their names; energetic discussion in Sepedi and movement accompanied this task.

The use of the learners' names engaged their sense of sound/spelling correlation (or phonological/graphemic awareness); integrated oracy and literacy; and brought their African language into contact with English, enabling translanguaging. Finally a teacher-dominated lesson was replaced by a lesson replete with learner effort. Teachers who observed the lesson were critical of the 'intervention teachers' not giving importance to handwriting, but they appreciated what could be done to more creatively achieve literacy goals and integrate two languages.



Changes in policy are not the basis for educational change.

Ideas for reshaping educational policies

This is one example of several interventions that resulted in positive responses from teachers, which included decisions to try out these interventions in their own lessons.

In summarising our findings, we would assert that:

- Changes in policy are not the basis for educational change;
- Classroom practices (the hidden curriculum) are often impervious to changes in policy;
- There is a persistence of oracy, lower-order thinking, everyday knowledge and teacher-led repetition, which have become routine despite frequent policy change;
- Educational policies sustaining the predominance of English-medium instruction with teachers' weak conceptual understanding has necessitated the prevalence of 'safe talk';
- Academics often research teacher practice but do not offer pedagogic alternatives;
- Academic researchers do not convert their own theories into classroom practices, thus denying teachers the visibility of powerful theories as pedagogic practice;
- Academic researchers need to teach lessons in school that regular teachers can observe and critically engage with in relation to teachers' own practices;
- This engagement by researchers and teachers around their respective practices could lead to tapping and developing teachers' 'sense of plausibility' (Prabhu 1987); and
- Developing a sense of plausibility could result in a critical reassessment of official policies from below, as well as contribute to policy reshaping. ■

Authors: Professor Esther Ramani, Institute for the Study of English in Africa, Rhodes University; Dr Michael Joseph, Associate Professor, Department of Education, Rhodes University.

LESSONS IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY: A CLASSROOM STUDY IN LIMPOPO

The objective of the Language-in-Education Policy (LIEP) is to maintain a learner's home language(s) while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional language(s). In practice though, learners' home language development is being abandoned too early, as shown by the abysmal literacy achievement of learners in a study in Limpopo. *Cas Prinsloo* explains.



In 2007, the HSRC studied literacy practices in depth in a sample of 20 schools from all five districts of Limpopo.

The study focused on classrooms in Grades 1 to 4, and uncovered an abysmal literacy achievement among learners. Findings pointed to the primary cause of poor performance, as corroborated by a number of other studies in other provinces.

The most significant finding from the Limpopo study was that by August/September 2007, only a minority of learners had been required to write in their exercise books on at least a weekly basis.

Outcomes associated with such low levels of commitment and challenge included that not even one in four learners wrote short sentences at least every week in their home language. Three in every four learners did not write even a short paragraph, a figure that increased to nine out of 10 for not writing short letters or essays.

More than three out of every four learners did not write more complex or longer sentences – a task important in Grade 4 in work across the curriculum – at least 10 times between January and August, while one in every three never did.

Such infrequent opportunities or expectations to write even simple sentences, let alone more complex sentences and paragraphs, are a matter of grave concern. The absence of extended writing opportunities and practice is a well-established causal factor in educational failure of learners.



The absence of extended writing opportunities and practice is a causal factor in educational failure.

A country-wide symptom

South African research and evidence from large-scale assessments conducted by the national and provincial departments of education show that after the first three school years, from Grade 4 onwards, only a minority of

learners sufficiently master content subjects across the curriculum. The result is that they will almost certainly not succeed in secondary school. This in turn compromises young people's options once they've left school.

To address this, urgent and drastic realignments are needed between the spirit and letter of the constitution with regards to equity and that of the curriculum as it articulates with the LiEP.



'Learning to read' has to be converted into 'reading to learn'.

How to escape language development failure

Numerous studies argue for the indispensable role of literacy and language acquisition as the building blocks of further learning, personal wellbeing and economic opportunity. The critical role of first-language (and literacy) acquisition during the preschool and early school years, and the importance of these foundations for learning a second language or additional languages, are well established. Language and literacy acquisition and development anchor subsequent cognitive development and academic proficiency.

'Learning to read' has to be converted into 'reading to learn'. In doing so, and by aligning language use with the individual and cultural values of all home languages, successful second-language learning in formal educational settings can take place. The requirements necessary for such alignment would benefit second-language learning in a number of ways.

First, it is dependent upon the successful development of the language best known and used by the child upon entry to school (known as the mother tongue, home language or first language). Successful development in reading and writing can only be achieved within a time frame of six or more years using the language most familiar to the child.

Second, where the intention is to develop reading and writing in a second language that will later become the medium of instruction, this language must also be taught for a minimum of six years before the learner is expected to use it as a medium of learning. In this scenario, the second language has to be taught well enough to enable students to learn a large body of vocabulary and understand how the syntax works in both spoken and written form.

This also means very focused and systematic development of reading and writing opportunities and practices. Unless well-resourced second-language teaching and learning is provided as a subject, the second language cannot safely replace any first language as the language of teaching and learning.

Policy implications

In formulating implications and recommendations from the Limpopo study, the researchers attempted to resolve the discrepancy between current classroom practice and the official language education policy. Any attempt to address classroom challenges without meaningful consideration of language policy implementation would be a fruitless exercise.

The key objective of language policy should be to maintain home language teaching and learning for as long as possible.



The key objective of language policy should be to maintain home language teaching and learning for as long as possible so that learners achieve sufficiently strong reading and writing skills in this language while simultaneously learning a second language. For most students, this second language would be English.

To have sufficient command of a second language requires a sufficient body of vocabulary and a familiarity with the syntax of this language. It also requires knowledge of complex sentence structures and the different styles of writing used for science, history, geography and mathematics. Nowhere in the world can this level of proficiency in a second language be achieved by the majority of learners in a state school system in fewer than six to eight years.

Where attempts have been made to switch from the home language in fewer than six years, learners rarely complete school and very few of them progress to higher education.

Recommendations

There should be a common strategy towards language and education. In compiling this strategy, university-based linguists and specialists in cognition; teacher educators and educators at every level, from classroom teachers to provincial and national officials; school governing bodies; and other structures within civil society should be involved.

A strong balance has to be maintained between conceptual and theoretical assumptions and practical implementation. This includes, for instance, teachers' understanding of the approaches to literacy and language teaching referred to in the curriculum documentation. Specifically, it is necessary to address what teachers understand by the term 'the communicative approach to language teaching' on the one hand, and how they make sense of the apparent contradiction between the 'phonics' and 'whole language' approaches to teaching literacy on the other hand.

Uncertainty about these terms has found its way into classroom practices in the form of misunderstandings of how to teach reading and writing, and how to develop strong language skills. Such uncertainty and misunderstanding has resulted in dysfunctional classroom practices, which have to be addressed urgently. ■

Author: Dr Cas Prinsloo, research specialist, Education and Skills Development programme, HSRC.

The policy proposal is explained in depth in an HSRC Policy Brief, available on <http://bit.ly/Pm4L5f>.

PEER EDUCATION: OPENING DOORS IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Peer education is a key health promotion strategy and an important mechanism to challenge and shift youth behavioural norms, especially with regard to sexual behaviour – an issue still not easily discussed between adults and youth in South Africa. Peer education provides opportunities for candid and genuine examinations of attitudes and choices to see and hear about different ways to be healthy from other young people. *Sharlene Swartz* explains.

Over many years of programme implementation, globally and in South Africa, empirical evidence regarding peer education's efficacy has been difficult to obtain, and evidence of change for participants has been elusive.

The HSRC conducted a three-year study to measure the impact and effectiveness of a peer-education programme in the Western Cape. The programme was funded by The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and was implemented by the Western Cape departments of health and basic education in collaboration with various NGOs, with technical support from the Centre for the Support of Peer Education.

The study showed how peer education increased levels of knowledge and discussion about HIV and AIDS among young people; improved measures of self-efficacy regarding sexual decision making; and heightened sensitivities among young people regarding their need for help and support. It also showed how participants made gains in other areas of their lives, including compassion, leadership and academic improvement.

Research design

A mixed method research design (with both qualitative and quantitative components) was used to assess the impact of a structured, peer education curriculum-based programme called Listen Up. The programme dealt with topics such as finding help and support for problems, how to make decisions, recognising healthy relationships, HIV risk, alcohol and teenage pregnancy. The target group was first-year high school learners with peer education delivered by same-age peers with support and training from NGOs and teachers.

Changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes and intentions were measured at three intervals: immediately before the intervention, immediately after the intervention and between five and seven months later, and then compared with a control group. A total of 35 schools (27 intervention schools and eight control schools), stratified by district, were randomly selected out of 236 schools in the Western Cape where peer education was being implemented. The initial sample comprised 2 904 learners with some dropping out over time.

For the qualitative study, eight of these schools were chosen to serve as in-depth case studies of how the programme was

implemented and to closely consider the contexts in which peer education took place.

The qualitative methods included focus groups with peer educators and peer learners, and individual interviews with adult stakeholders such as those from NGOs, teachers supervising peer education programmes, school principals, and education and health department officials.

There were three substantive findings from the study: the influence of school context on peer education; improvements in HIV knowledge and attitudes along with increased sexual self-efficacy as a key finding from the quantitative survey; and a number of more subtle changes in hard and soft skills, such as improved academic performance, leadership ability and compassion from the qualitative study.



Historically coloured rural schools and the extremely well-resourced suburban schools displayed the most positive school climate.

School contexts for peer education

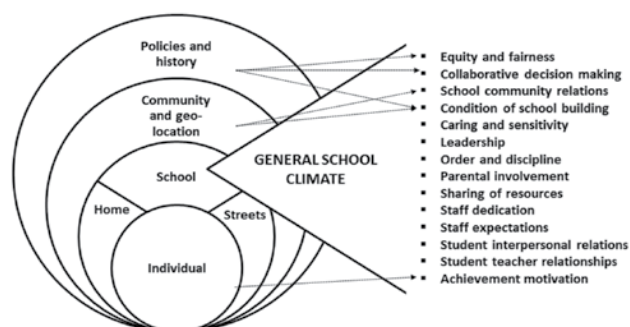
In this study, intentional efforts were made to obtain and analyse data gleaned from conducting in-depth observations of the school and community culture contexts.

Two theories were used to investigate how school context affected the outcomes of peer education. The data analysis was shaped by the ecological framework formulated by Russian psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, who emphasises that an individual is influenced by multiple contexts, from home, school and the streets through to community and geographical location and the policies and history of a location.

This idea was combined with the work of Norris Haynes, a US-based educator and academic, who has long investigated the factors that influence educational outcomes, especially in impoverished communities. He terms these the 'school climate' and details what Bronfenbrenner only brushes over.

In Figure 1, Haynes lists the factors that comprise the school climate, including staff behaviour and expectations; relationships between students, and students and staff; parental involvement in a school as well as school-community interactions (among others). In conducting their analysis for the HSRC study, researchers hypothesised that schools with a more positive climate (i.e. doing well in each of these areas) were also more likely to show better peer educational outcomes.

Figure 1: The components of school climate



Researchers found that the historically coloured rural schools and the extremely well-resourced suburban schools displayed the most positive school climate, according to Haynes' criteria. Conversely, the historically coloured-only schools and the historically black-only schools in urban locations displayed the least positive school climate characteristics.

An all-black peri-urban school established after the 1994 transition displayed a mix of positive and negative school climate characteristics despite the impoverished context in which it was located. Not surprisingly, in the final analysis, schools with the most positive climate (the coloured rural schools and the suburban school) also showed the largest gain in overall peer education outcomes.

This peer education programme fostered a compassionate and caring attitude among learners.

Changes in sexual self-efficacy

In the quantitative component of the study, when the results were compared at baseline (before peer education) with the results of those who had subsequently received peer education, the intervention schools were found to produce statistically better outcomes in five specific areas: future orientation; self-efficacy in sexual decision making; knowledge regarding HIV transmission; knowledge regarding HIV prevention; and knowledge about what constituted a healthy relationship.

After five to seven months, participants from the intervention schools were again measured and yielded statistically better outcomes with regard to self-efficacy in sexual decision making and knowledge of HIV transmission.



(The programme) developed peer educators' academic skills and improved their decision making, leadership and communication skills.

Uncovering more subtle changes

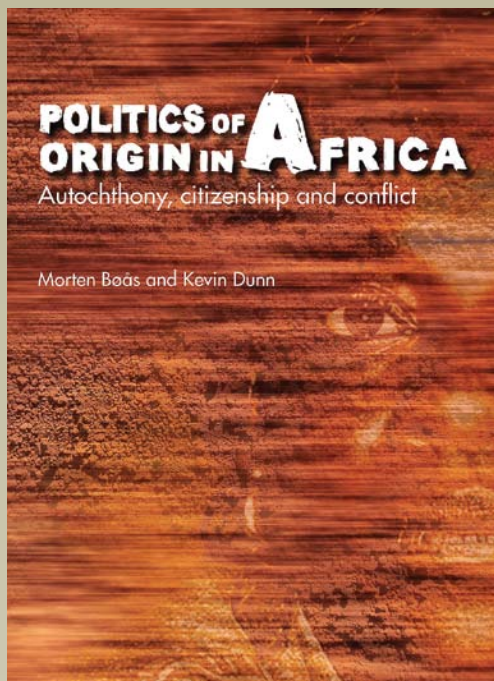
While these results were encouraging, showing that youth who were involved in this peer education programme were better able and more confident to make decisions regarding their sexual health and retained knowledge about protecting themselves from HIV infection over time, the more subtle effects of peer education were also uncovered.

In the qualitative part of the study, researchers collected stories of change from peer education participants, including teachers and other adults. These stories showed that this peer education programme fostered a compassionate and caring attitude among learners despite their environmental obstacles, and resulted in instances of improved family and community relations; developed peer educators' academic skills as well as improved their decision making, leadership and communication skills; opened doors for learners to deal with traumatic life experiences, such as abuse and exposure to violence; and had an overall positive impact on teachers' perceptions of learners – both on those who functioned as peer educators and those who participated in the programme.

These findings augur well for the future of peer education in South African schools, especially in communities that struggle with high-risk sexual behaviours and other social ills. The challenge now is to improve peer education as a key intervention strategy, and to add to the growing body of evidence of the doors that peer education opens in the lives of young people. ■

Author: Sharlene Swartz, research director, Human and Social Development programme, HSRC.

The full report, Swartz S, Bhana A, Moolman B, Arogundade E, Solomon J, Timol F, & Vawda M. (2014). Opening locked doors. Evaluating peer education in schools in the Western Cape Province, is available on <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-outputs/view/6577>



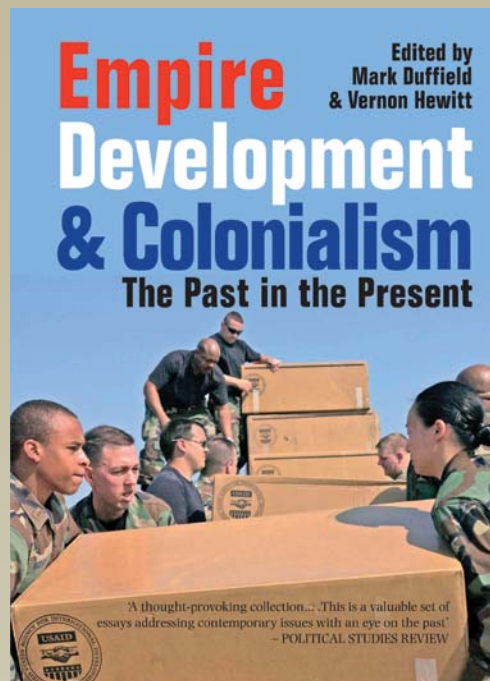
Politics of Origin in Africa

Authors: Morten Bøås and Kevin Dunn
Pub month & year: August 2013
ISBN soft cover: 978-0-7969-2437-7
Format: 235 x 168 mm
Extent: 160 pages
Price: R210.00
Rights: Southern African Rights only (ZED)

In this revealing new book, Bøås and Dunn explore the phenomenon of autochthony in contemporary African politics. Autochthony discourses enable the speaker to establish a direct claim to territory by the assertion of being an original inhabitant, a native – literally a 'son of the soil'. In contemporary Africa, questions concerning origin are currently among the most crucial and contested issues in political life, as they directly relate to the politics of place, belonging, identity and contested citizenship.

As well as examining the reasons behind this recent rise of autochthony, the book contains in-depth empirical evidence from high-profile case studies from across Africa. These include the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), specifically the contested status of the 'Rwandophone' in North Kivu; Côte d'Ivoire, enmeshed in a civil war; Liberia, where these issues are at the heart of the so-called 'Mandingo-question'; and Kenya, as it grapples with the issue of nativism playing out across the Horn of Africa.

Politics of Origin in Africa is an essential book for anyone wishing to understand this crucial issue and its impact on contemporary African politics and conflicts.



Empire development and colonialism: The past in the present

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What are we to make of the parallels between the language of nineteenth-century liberal imperialism and the humanitarian interventionism of the post-Cold War era? Are interconnections such as the use by the American military – both in Somalia in the early 1990s and in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion – of ethno-graphic information compiled by earlier British colonial administrators an accidental curiosity or is it something more elemental? The contributors to this book articulate the belief that these comparisons are analytically revealing. From the language of moral necessity and conviction, the design of specific aid packages, the devised forms of intervention and governmentality, through to the lifestyle, design and location of NGO encampments, the authors seek to account for the numerous and often striking parallels between contemporary international security, development and humanitarian intervention, and the logic of Empire.

Empire Development and Colonialism will be of great interest to all those concerned with understanding the historical antecedents and wider implications of today's emergent liberal interventionism, and the various logics of international development.